

Pappas Telecasting Companies' 'donation' of \$325,000 in airtime to Republican candidates in certain areas is yet another example of a powerful media group abusing its privileged access to the public airwaves.

If this is not political campaigning, then what is? This is a very blatant effort to affect elections. How does this serve the public interest? Why is the FCC permitting this kind of behavior? If Sinclair or Pappa were donating this time to the Democrats, the Republicans would be screaming bloody murder. This is another issue that shows that the media ownership laws in this country need to be changed to prevent automatic renewal of licenses and bust up the big media conglomerates that are only interested in looking out for their own interests at the expense of the American public.

Localism is not served when a corporate headquarters decides to provide one side in local elections a louder voice than others. During election season, local audiences should be offered genuine debate -- not disingenuous offers to "purchase" an equal amount of response time.

Pappas uses the public airwaves free of charge and is obligated by law to serve the public interest. Pappas' actions are legally questionable and cast doubt on whether Pappas truly intends to serve the public interest. Their actions show why we need to strengthen media ownership rules, not weaken them. Further, they show why the license renewal process needs to involve more than just a returned postcard. Thank you.